

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for identifying features in an object, comprising:

positioning and focusing an ~~an~~ polarimeter onto the object;

illuminating the object with a series of at least 16 polarization states;

analyzing a plurality of reflected images corresponding to said at least 16 polarization states;

obtaining a Mueller matrix ~~is obtained for each~~ of the plurality of reflected images; and

calculating a depolarization parameter from the Mueller matrix.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 1, wherein said depolarization parameter comprises ~~one of~~:

at least one of an average degree of polarization ~~and or~~ a weighted average degree of polarization of the reflected images.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 1, wherein said depolarization parameter comprises ~~one of~~:

at least one of a degree of polarization surface ~~and or~~ a degree of polarization map of the reflected images.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 3, further comprising:

calculating at least one of a minimum and a maximum degrees of polarization of the reflected images.

Claim 5 (Original): The method of Claim 4, wherein said step of calculating at least one of a minimum and a maximum degrees of polarization comprises:

calculating both a minimum and a maximum degrees of polarization; and

calculating a difference between said minimum and a maximum degrees of polarization.

Claim 6 (Original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

decomposing said Mueller matrix into a depolarization matrix and at least one of a diattenuation matrix and a retardance matrix.

Claim 7 (Original): The method of Claim 6, further comprising:

calculating a depolarization relative to a corresponding diattenuation or retardance axis.

Claim 8 (Original): The method of Claim 6, further comprising:

calculating a depolarization relative to a corresponding diattenuation or retardance off-axis.

Claim 9 (Original): The method of Claim 8, wherein said off-axis is  $45^\circ$ .

Claim 10 (Original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising: calculating a ratio of diattenuation to polarizance.

Claim 11 (Original): The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
  
calculating a ratio of an average magnitude of Mueller matrix rows to an average magnitude of Mueller matrix columns.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 1, wherein said polarimeter comprises ~~one of~~ at least one of

an optical polarimeter;  
an X-ray polarimeter;  
an IR polarimeter; or and  
a UV ~~polarimeter~~ polarimeter.

Claim 13 (Original): A method of retinal polarimetry, comprising:  
  
emitting laser light to a retina via (a) a polarizer, (b) a first liquid crystal polarization controller, (c) a non-polarizing beam splitter, (d) a rotating half-wave retarder, and (e) an objective lens, the laser light passing through (a), (b) and (c) in this order; and  
  
reflecting light from the retina to a co-polarized photodetector via the objective lens, the rotating half-wave retarder, the non-polarizing beam splitter, a second liquid crystal polarization controller, and a polarizing beam splitter.

Claim 14 (Original): The method of Claim 13, further comprising:  
  
passing light from said polarizing beam splitter to a cross-polarized photodetector.

Claim 15 (Original): The method of Claim 14, further comprising:

adjusting a light parameter by controlling the retardance of said first and second liquid crystal polarization controllers by changing a respective retardance over more than one wave of retardation.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 15, further comprising:  
acquiring four sets of images, wherein  
a first set of images corresponds to the two liquid crystal polarization controllers being adjusted to  $+7/8$  and  $+7/8$  waves retardance,  
a second set of images corresponds to the two liquid crystal polarization controllers being adjusted to  $+7/8$  and  $+9/8$  waves retardance,  
a third set of images corresponds to the two liquid crystal polarization controllers being adjusted to  $+9/8$  and  $+9/8$  waves, and  
a fourth set of images corresponds to the two liquid crystal polarization controllers being adjusted to  $+9/8$  and  $+7/8$  waves.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A method of retinal polarimetry, comprising:  
illuminating a retina with polarized light via a probe inserted into the eye;  
producing a depolarization parameter and one of a retardance and a diattenuation parameter;  
collecting light reflected off the retina with a receiver located outside of the eye or inside of the eye;  
analyzing the reflected light with a polarization state analyzer;  
obtaining a Mueller matrix image from the reflected light; and  
analyzing said Mueller matrix to obtain a depolarization parameter.